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## NPS participates in Salinas Airshows STEM Runway

Tonthat, Tom

Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey California

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# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

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*U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Tom Tonthat*

## NPS participates in Salinas Airshow's STEM Runway

*By MC2 Tom Tonthat*

Volunteers from the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) hosted a trio of interactive booths to spark interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) in attendees of the California International Airshow in Salinas, March 23-24, part of an expanded addition to the popular event called the STEM Runway.

“The purpose of hosting STEM exhibits was to encourage STEM sciences to middle school youth in the Salinas Valley,” said NPS Air Warfare Chair Capt. Ed McCabe, who helped arrange NPS’ presence at the airshow. “Faculty and military staff from the campus manned these booths to show students some practical and fun demonstrations of science and technology.”

Hundreds of middle school students from throughout Monterey County navigated the STEM Runway, where NPS students, staff and faculty gave interactive demonstrations in the area of undersea operations, space and augmented reality, and oceanography.

“We want NPS to be recognized as one of the major institutions in Monterey County for STEM, and showcase the research that we do,” said NPS Program Officer Cmdr. Paula Travis, who also helped coordinate the university’s participation, and operated the oceanography booth. “We are an engine that drives the adoption of new practices and technology.”

In addition to hands-on demonstrations at the NPS booths, students had a chance to talk to Navy Sailors, including members of the U.S. Navy Blue Angels ground crew who visited the STEM Runway before their flight demonstration.

“It is important to encourage our youth to study,” said McCabe. Interest in science and technology now means more scientists and researchers in the future, solving our nation’s most “vexing challenges,” he said.

After experiencing a sample of what NPS is about, Travis reminded attendees that the whole university will be on display come October 25 for the annual Discover NPS Day.

“We've got a great staff at NPS, and we've got an important mission to help solve military and national security problems,” she said. “We're executing it every day, and getting students involved with technology and science is essential to inspiring the next generation of problem solvers.”

3/25/19

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